

The Skills Partnership

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54409

Name of lead inspector: Jane Shaw HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. The Skills Partnership (TSP) is a private limited company established in 2005 with specialisms in the leisure and fitness industry, facilities management and media sectors. The company holds a direct national contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes in the subject areas of sport, leisure and recreation; media; and, business, administration and law. TSP also has a contract for Train to Gain programmes in cleaning, warehousing, hospitality, customer service, business administration and preparation for life and work.
2. The company delivers training mainly at employers' sites – largely private fitness clubs and gyms – throughout England. The head office is situated in Theale and an administrative and meeting centre is located in Goring-on-Thames.
3. Most of TSP's apprentices are based in the West Midlands, London and the south east of England, although there are small numbers in every other English region except the North East. The number of learners on Train to Gain programmes has dropped significantly in the current year to fewer than 60, compared with over 1,100 in the previous contract year. At the time of inspection, there were 650 learners, of whom 276 were following courses in customer services, management, team leadership or business administration; 152 in sport and fitness; and, 63 in media. Others were following programmes in cleaning, hospitality, warehousing, retail, and education and training. These programmes were not graded.
4. The provider provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - Westminster Kingsway College.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Employer provision:	
Train to Gain	1,170 learners
Apprenticeships	1,238 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision		Grade 2
Capacity to improve		Grade 2
		Grade
Outcomes for learners		2
Quality of provision		2
Leadership and management		2
Safeguarding		2
Equality and diversity		2
Subject Areas		
Sport, leisure and recreation		2
Media and communication		2
Business, administration and law		2

Overall effectiveness

5. TSP has continued to improve since its last inspection. Most of its learners complete their qualification within the time expected, in all subject areas. Its learners do better than those with most other providers. TSP looks after its learners well, and if anyone is at risk of falling behind, it puts in extra help.
6. Learners really enjoy their training programmes, especially those doing sport and fitness and media courses. Their training gives them the skills they need to get jobs in their chosen careers.
7. The company has reorganised itself as it has grown to make sure all the tutors are properly trained to teach learners. But most of the tutors have only had basic teacher training so far. Learners on media and fitness programmes learn how to use the equipment they need in their industries, but business learners do not have enough teaching or written materials to help them learn.

8. TSP makes sure learners are on the right course, but some learners with language problems, because their first language is not English, do not get the help they need.
9. TSP is good at keeping its learners safe, and making sure they understand about treating everyone fairly. Learners do an additional qualification about safety and fairness. However they do not get enough information about staying safe on the internet.
10. TSP has good leaders, who make sure that the company continues to get better. The leaders are particularly good at talking to their employers, to make sure the training is just what the employers want, as well as the learners. But the report they have to write saying how good they are, and why, is not clear and so can not be used to plan how to improve.

Main findings

- Qualification success rates, particularly for apprentices, are good. They have increased steadily over the last four years. The proportion of apprentices who complete their qualifications in time is also good, and better than that for the average provider. As well as achieving their qualifications, learners enjoy their training programmes.
- Learners develop particularly good workplace skills which increase their employability. Learners on leisure and fitness programmes develop an understanding of how to promote themselves and move towards self-employment, as well as developing their technical skills. In media and fitness learners gain skills, a passion for their work and relevant experience. Many learners in customer service and management progress to further qualifications.
- Most teaching, learning and assessment sessions are good, and in media they are inspirational and outstanding. However, some tutors are not yet confident in the move from their previous role of assessors. Tutors have good experience in the industry, but few have substantial teaching or coaching experience or training. In business administration, tutors often lead assessment while the learner sits passively.
- Learners in leisure and fitness and media make particularly good use of resources for learning. Many of the tutors in leisure and fitness use mobile phones to record evidence of learners' performance for their electronic portfolios. Learners in media use state-of-the-art music technology equipment with increasing confidence. However, learners in business administration do not have enough written resources.
- Tutors provide good advice and guidance to make sure learners are on the right course, and give useful information about progression opportunities. They refer learners needing help with literacy or numeracy to a specialist tutor, and allocate extra time for learners who need more frequent visits. However, not all tutors are aware of the help available for learners needing language support.

- TSP raises expectations well through its clear strategy of shifting its emphasis from assessment to training. Internal verifiers now have an effective management role to support and develop trainers. Training to support them has been commissioned, but has not yet been completed. Some staff are not yet confident in their new roles.
- Learners understand potential safeguarding and health and safety concerns well, especially those learners working in gyms and with children. Awareness of safeguarding and health and safety is integral to the training. Learners complete a nationally recognised award in safeguarding.
- TSP promotes equality and diversity particularly well. All staff and learners have a good awareness and understanding of equality and diversity, and how that can impact on their work. Tutors promote equality and diversity in the taught sessions and then reinforce it very effectively during assessments. TSP is reducing the achievement gap between different groups of learners.
- TSP has gained accreditation for a Personal and Professional Development (PPD) programme it has written, which all learners follow. It covers health and safety, safeguarding and equality and diversity in enough detail to stimulate learners' thinking rather than simply repeating standard responses. However, it does not cover e-safety sufficiently thoroughly, and is not suitable for higher levels.
- TSP works closely with its employers to improve its provision and meet users' needs. Employers are enthusiastic about the partnership working. TSP places tutors within its bigger companies where appropriate, to support learners. It uses telephone surveys to get detailed feedback from employers. It has changed the time and place of taught courses following feedback from learners.
- The company has a strong quality improvement function. The system for observing teaching and learning has already improved some tutors' performance, although not all staff have yet been trained in its use. However, the company does not analyse and use all of the data it holds, particularly on learners' feedback and destinations after learners have finished their programmes.
- TSP is aware of its own strengths and weaknesses, and has relevant, clear and well-monitored action plans for improvement. However, it has not expressed these judgements about its strengths or areas for improvement in the self-assessment report, which is discursive and unclear particularly in the curriculum area reports.

What does The Skills Partnership need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all staff are aware of the availability of specialist language support for speakers of languages other than English, and of the process for referring learners for support so that they receive the help they need.
- Develop tutors' teaching, coaching and assessment skills further to ensure they can plan learning to meet individual learners' needs.

- Ensure that managers receive training to support their development in their new roles, and to enable them to continue to improve their support for tutors in encouraging learners' progress.
- Further develop the new PPD programme for safeguarding, health and safety and equality and diversity to meet the needs of learners at all levels and promote understanding of e-safety.
- Make better use of the information about learners' feedback and destinations, to improve the provision further for future learners.
- Further develop the self-assessment process, particularly at curriculum level, so that all tutors and managers are clear about what they do well, where they are less strong, and how they can improve the quality of learners' outcomes and experiences.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the knowledgeable, helpful, experienced and accessible tutors
- the close link between the training and the job role
- gaining qualifications, confidence and a career path
- the high-quality four-day concentrated exercise and fitness training course
- having a second chance at learning
- learning and earning at the same time, rather than struggling with student debt
- being interested, not bored, and being pushed to exceed expectations.

What learners would like to see improved:

- not feeling so rushed
- the long distances they have to travel to attend the training
- the timing of training so that it is at a time more convenient for their shifts
- the independent advice and guidance, to ensure being on the right course.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- TSP's support for what they are trying to do
- TSP's understanding of their business
- TSP's willingness to change to ensure apprentices follow the most recent industry model
- TSP's willingness to support high standards for their apprentices.

What employers would like to see improved:

- nothing identified.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

11. The provider's qualification success rates for apprentices have improved steadily since the last inspection, and remain higher than those for all providers. At the same time, the size and geographic spread of the provision has increased substantially. Internal figures suggest that success rates for the current year are already at the same level as at the end of last year, and should rise further. TSP has a detailed understanding of the reasons behind local fluctuations in performance, and has developed and implemented a system to monitor performance closely at individual tutor and qualification level, to make sure that any signs of under performance by tutors or learners are identified and dealt with early on.
12. The provider has undertaken substantial restructuring and internal change in anticipation of the decline in Train to Gain funding, and to ensure consistent improvement in its apprenticeship provision. The growth in size of the provision has meant that the company has needed to put more structured quality assurance measures in place. Creating a management and coaching role for internal verifiers has provided better support for tutors. The company has improved its arrangements to plan and monitor learners' progress. Tutors have contributed to the design of an improved individual learning plan, focusing on learners' attainment compared with where learners should be at any point in their programme. This makes it easier for tutors and managers to check how well learners are doing, and to put more support in quickly for any learner who starts to fall behind. A system for observing teaching and learning has been introduced, but not all staff have yet been trained in its use.
13. The self-assessment report does not do justice to the company's detailed understanding of its provision. It does not act as a baseline for improvement. The company has increased managers' and staff involvement in making judgements for self-assessment, but the methodology for doing this is under developed and unclear. Tutors and their managers are not clear about the content of the self-assessment report, and employers' views are not included.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

14. Apprentices and learners in Train to Gain provision enjoy their programmes and develop good industry standard skills. In media, where many learners start from disadvantaged backgrounds, they make the most of the opportunity to develop employability skills building on their passion for music. Similarly, learners in exercise and fitness leap at the chance to make a career in the sport they love. They work hard and do well. Learners in customer service and management develop good professional skills and expertise.
15. Most TSP apprentices and advanced apprentices complete their programme, and an increasing number complete in the time planned. TSP analyses

performance by age, gender, subject area, tutor and employers' site, and effectively supports any under-performing groups.

16. Learners feel safe and use safe working practices.
17. Learners in leisure and fitness make positive and informed choices about their own health and well-being. Learners in media make a positive contribution to the community through innovative projects and the nature of the work they do.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

18. Teaching, training and assessment support learning well. In sport and fitness and in media, learners are enthusiastic about developing industry-standard skills and expertise in the use of the tools of their trade. In these subject areas, resources are used well to support learning. Some larger employers offer a licensed specialist training programme to their learners in customer service.
19. Tutors in all subject areas have good industry experience, and provide good role models, but many are not experienced trainers. They have received only the basic level of teacher training. Many do not have the skills to tailor sessions to make sure they meet the needs of individual learners, and there is no shared understanding of the critical importance of targets to motivate learners. The development of a new individual learning plan, 'My Learning Journey', forces more consideration of short-term targets, but not all tutors and learners are using it yet. Managers support tutors conscientiously, but the change from being an internal verifier to managing a team of tutors is challenging. Planned management development to support managers in their new roles has not yet taken place. In the business programmes, there is not enough focus on training, either through taught sessions or through using well-designed resources. Much assessment is tutor led.
20. The provision is well designed to meet the needs of learners and their employers. Managers work closely with employers to adjust the content when this is necessary. Learners in media and fitness are delighted to find programmes that prepare them for employment in the industry for which they already have a passion. Many learners in customer service and management have the opportunity to take further qualifications and make progress in their careers.
21. Learners are well supported. They have clear advice and guidance to make sure they are on the right course. Tutors refer learners needing additional help to a literacy and numeracy specialist tutor. Learners receiving support are closely monitored, and generally outperform those who do not need this help. However, some learners' needs for support in language are unmet, partly because tutors are unaware of the specialist provision available.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

22. Leaders have a clear strategy to continue to improve provision and raise success rates further by restructuring the organisation and focusing on training for learners rather than assessment alone. Internal verifiers have an enhanced role with management responsibility for local teams of tutors. Staff have stretching targets which are closely and supportively monitored through coaching by line managers and senior management.
23. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Staff in direct contact with learners have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau. Managers and staff share information very well about learners who are deemed to be at risk of not completing their courses, and there are good systems to manage learners who are thought to be at risk of failing. Managers and staff use a web-based risk register very effectively to record all welfare issues for 'at risk' learners. Reasons for inclusion on the register could be medical, personal, financial or safeguarding. Senior managers monitor the register well to ensure appropriate support is provided and maintained. They provide clear guidance for tutors on what is expected of them in recording and supporting learners. Tutors initiate information in the register as soon as they become aware of learners' concerns.
24. Staff complete comprehensive risk assessments for all employers' premises and tutors update these during most visits to ensure learners are safe in their employment. TSP has developed a nationally recognised PPD qualification in safeguarding, health and safety and equality and diversity which is a component of all new learners' apprenticeship programmes. Tutors use it effectively to reinforce and develop skills. Learners asked to have a safeguarding contact card, with a helpline number to call, and this has now been provided. Although basic e-safety is built into the PPD training, there is not enough focus on promoting learners' understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet.
25. TSP uses its PPD programme effectively to reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity. However, the materials are not sufficiently stimulating for higher level learners, such as those on advanced apprenticeships.
26. TSP has developed programmes to provide opportunities for those who might not otherwise be involved in education and training, for example the media programme. A programme for activity leaders in Birmingham has been particularly successful in widening participation and getting young people involved in activities in their local communities.
27. The company works with employers to identify company-wide training needs and strategies to meet them. Where possible, it bases a tutor within a company to maximise assessment opportunities for learners. It has developed programmes in new areas, such as warehousing, to meet national priorities. Following feedback from learners, training courses previously offered in Maidenhead and poorly attended are now offered in locations which have good transport routes from London. TSP uses customer surveys well to elicit

feedback from employers and learners, and is developing 'virtual' focus groups of learners, using conference calling rather than bringing learners to one central venue.

28. TSP has developed self-assessment to involve more staff, and to include regular and stringent reviews of its quality improvement plans. However, the self-assessment report does not reflect the rigour of its analysis. TSP uses data and its management structure well to provide detailed information about the performance of each tutor working with each employer. It has appropriate and detailed plans for improvement which are monitored thoroughly. It is moving towards having curriculum leaders as well as locality teams, but they are not yet taking full responsibility for the curriculum areas. Curriculum teams have a less good understanding of the data. Most curriculum level commentary in the self-assessment report lacks judgements and fails to note the company's strengths, as well as its areas for improvement.

Subject areas

Sport, leisure and recreation

Grade 2

Context

29. TSP works with a wide variety of employers from large national companies to small local employers. It has 84 apprentices in exercise and fitness instruction and 2 in activity leadership. There are 37 advanced apprentices in personal training, 20 in exercise and fitness, and 9 in leisure management. The provision is located all over England in hotels and public and private gyms and leisure centres.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. TSP has increased significantly the proportion of its 19- to 24-year-old apprentices who complete their qualification in the time allowed by more than 30 percentage points over the last 4 years. However, the performance of the smaller number of advanced apprentices aged over 25 has fluctuated, for reasons the provider is aware of.
- Learners enjoy their programmes and develop very good sports training skills. Those in activity leadership lead well-planned sports activities with children in schools. Exercise and fitness instructors demonstrate a high level of knowledge of anatomy and physiology as well as highly-developed technical skills during their training sessions. However, some advanced apprentices do not demonstrate the level of skills and knowledge expected.
- Learners have a good understanding of health and well-being. They know how exercise contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They are enthusiastic about maintaining their own health and fitness and about motivating others. Some have developed their careers significantly after the completion of their courses and are now managing centres and sending their own staff on the programme.
- Teaching and learning are good. Most tutors are well qualified and build learners' confidence. Several tutors are experienced players or athletes and provide inspirational role models. Tutors plan their sessions well. Individual workshops promote learning very effectively. However, some less experienced tutors do not have sufficient detailed specialist knowledge in aspects of the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 requirements.
- Tutors and assessors plan assessments well and learners know what is expected of them. They receive clear, constructive feedback on their performance. The use of online assessment and the new 'My Learning Journey' individual learning plan encourage the learner to take responsibility for their progress. However, some personal trainers' assessments lack the rigour required for NVQ level 3 programmes.
- TSP makes good use of technology. Online learning resources are good. All tutors have laptops and smart phones which are used effectively to record and add information to the e-portfolios. Employers' facilities are generally very good

and fully support teaching and learning. However, in some locations tutors meet learners in public areas, which are noisy and where interruptions may occur.

- The programmes meet learners' and employers' requirements very well. In particular, NVQ level 2 programmes in exercise and fitness and activity leadership provide good opportunities for learners new to the industry to become qualified. Personal trainers can learn how to become self-employed. Very effective partnerships have been established and maintained with a range of employers.
- Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Tutors identify individuals' actual and perceived needs at induction. They provide individual tuition to support learners not able to attend taught courses. Tutors provide advice and guidance outside appointment times and respond quickly to enquiries. Learners appreciate the very good welfare and pastoral support.
- The new management structures are effective in improving the performance of the tutors, but have not been in place for long enough for all the benefits to be realised. The arrangements for observing teaching and learning are still being developed, although some observations and feedback have already taken place.
- The self-assessment recognises some the weaknesses of the provision but not the strengths. It is overly descriptive and lacks detailed judgements. Neither the substantial progress made over recent months nor the significant support needed by some staff are identified.

What does The Skills Partnership need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the programme of observations of teaching and learning to ensure learners benefit from good teaching and skills development from all tutors.
- Ensure all staff assessing at NVQ level 3 have a detailed understanding of all aspects of personal training and are confident and capable of providing difficult feedback to learners who underperform.
- Develop the self-assessment process to make the curriculum level report more evaluative and less descriptive, focusing on the strengths and areas for improvement.

Media and communication

Grade 2

Context

30. The Skills Partnership provides apprenticeships in the music business (recording industry) and advanced apprenticeships offering training in all aspects of the music business and production skills. Each learner is allocated to one of six departments within the partner company: radio, recording, sales and marketing, film, two-dimensional and three-dimensional animation and creative artist. The provision is situated in an area of social and economic deprivation near the centre of Birmingham. Most of the 63 learners are apprentices, but there are 7 advanced apprentices. Most are male, and about half are of minority ethnic heritage.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. All those who completed last year did so within the expected time. In the first year of the programme, success rates for younger learners were lower than those achieved by learners aged over 19. TSP has focused on the achievement of its younger learners and, in the current year, they are set to outperform their older colleagues.
- The standard of work is good across the provision. Learners are proud of their achievements. Each department has its own identity which helps learners feel they are part of a team. However, the self-assessment report does not reflect these or other strengths of the provision or identify where improvement is needed.
- Learners perform consistently well reaching high industry standards, from preparing podcasts and the online magazine to presenting the live radio broadcasts which are largely created by the learners. Opportunities to organise and contribute to live music events develop their personal and social skills. For example, learners choose topical material for daily debate in the radio broadcasts which engage listeners from the local community.
- Learners make outstanding contributions to the community. Some work with community groups creating events in partnership with local schools. Local young people are invited into the company to participate in radio debate. Local bands create recordings and videos. Opportunities are constantly arising for learners to extend their experiences, for example performing at the O2 Arena in London.
- Learning is outstanding. Some teaching is very good, stretching and challenging learners. However, not all tutors set targets that are suitable for individual learners' starting points, and the best practice of some tutors is not systematically shared. Not all sessions end with an evaluation to help learners develop the discipline of routinely evaluating their own and their peers' work.
- The use of technology to support learning is outstanding. Learners are working with cutting-edge technology. The server system allows film and web-based material to transfer at high speed. Learners benefit from the high levels of

investment. They gain experience and confidence in using a wide range of specialist equipment that prepares them well for employment in the media and communication industries.

- Partnerships between TSP and the employer, and with local community groups, are outstanding. Exciting projects take place because of the culture of innovation. All learners who achieve the apprenticeship join a 'bank' of artists and technicians. As a result they are offered further part-time or full-time work on completion of their apprenticeship, either with the employer or a partner company.
- Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Many of the learners have come to the provider with low esteem, financial and social disadvantage and poor experiences of learning. During their apprenticeship programmes they develop excellent personal and social skills and industry-standard expertise enabling them to improve significantly their economic and social well-being.

What does The Skills Partnership need to do to improve further?

- Involve all stakeholders, including the employer and learners, in the self-assessment process in order to create a report that more accurately reflects the good work that has been achieved in the workplace.
- Incorporate peer and group evaluation at the end of all taught sessions to develop a critical understanding of the work and an ethos of objective support among the learners.
- Ensure that all learners in all sessions are sufficiently challenged to develop and progress their skills and knowledge, by more rigorous setting and monitoring of individual targets for learning.
- Develop further the skills of trainers through meaningful observations, continuous professional development and sharing of best practice, to improve their ability to motivate, develop and support individual learners.
- Continue to develop strategies to recruit and retain more female learners.

Business, administration and law

Grade 2

Context

31. There are 276 learners in this subject area. Most are following programmes at NVQ level 2. There are 93 customer service apprentices, and another 13 are on Train to Gain programmes working towards an NVQ in customer service. There are also 12 advanced apprentices on customer service programmes. There are 60 apprentices on the team leading programme, 3 learners on Train to Gain who are working towards an NVQ in team leading, and 25 advanced apprentices in management. The remaining 59 apprentices and 11 advanced apprentices are working towards qualifications in business and administration. Most learners work in the leisure industry.

Key findings

- Nearly all apprentices and advanced apprentices complete their qualifications on time. Achievement rates for learners on Train to Gain are satisfactory. Learners produce good work that is usually related to their workplace duties. Learners enjoy their work and current learners are making good progress.
- Learners develop good occupational skills. Team leaders in particular improve their supervisory and communication skills. Learners focus on their work well. Some learners go on to achieve additional qualifications and some progress from seasonal to permanent employment. Learners grow in confidence, become more reflective and develop their ability to relate to others. Their verbal and written communication skills improve greatly.
- Learners have a good understanding of health and safety. Some learners have taken responsibility for improving health and safety within their workplaces. Some learners undertake additional training which relates to their job role, for example food safety. Learners take an additional qualification which covers health, safety, safeguarding and equality and diversity.
- Assessment is varied and thorough. However, there are few centrally produced resources to support learning. Some tutors produce their own, but the quality is not checked and some have spelling and grammatical errors. Tutors do not plan sufficiently for learners whose first language is not English. They rely on standard approaches and materials with no appropriate simplification of language.
- Reviews are comprehensive and ensure that learners have clear updates on their progress. Tutors complete assessment plans with little involvement by learners. Although tutors set precise verbal targets, neither they, nor the learners, record them in sufficient detail. Tutors make good use of e-portfolios and online testing but some learners cannot use the system unaided.
- TSP provides a wide range of programmes at intermediate and advanced levels in management, team leading, customer service and business administration. The qualifications, training and assessment are very closely linked to learners'

job roles and employers' needs. Tutors are flexible and work around shift patterns that include late-night working.

- Partnerships with employers are strong. Most employers support learners well and take an active role in reviews. They provide specific training to help learners prepare for assessment. In some instances, tutors work as part of the employer's team, tailoring provision to meet the needs of employees and the employer. In some workplaces learners have a mentor to help them.
- Open and well-informed discussions generally take place between learners, employers and TSP to ensure learners are placed on the right programme. Some employers have open events in conjunction with TSP to provide information about courses before learners make their choice. Learners are well informed about possible next steps in training and employment. Induction introduces all elements of the programme well, in a way learners can understand.
- Operational management is good overall with clear lines of responsibility. Internal verification coordinators take responsibility for local teams of tutors and monitor performance to continue to raise qualification success rates. Staff have stretching targets which are supportively monitored by management. However, there is insufficient emphasis on developing tutors' teaching and coaching skills further to support individual learners.
- Equality and diversity are well promoted with learners. Tutors use good resources, including video clips, at review to promote discussion and develop knowledge. Regular checks are made on their understanding; the PPD programme includes equality and diversity. However, the promotion of equality and diversity is underdeveloped with some employers so it is not always reinforced through the workplace.
- Self-assessment reporting at curriculum level is underdeveloped. The methodology for gathering information from staff is not clear. Tutors are not fully conversant with the content of the self-assessment report, or with how data have been analysed. The self-assessment report does not include sufficient specific targets to bring about improvement in curriculum areas, nor in the development of teaching and coaching.

What does The Skills Partnership need to do to improve further?

- Improve the focus of the self-assessment process to include a detailed analysis of the subject area, informed by data and the views of learners, staff and employers that will identify the area's strengths and areas for improvement and so form the basis of a specific action plan.
- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of, and have access to, a comprehensive bank of teaching resources and ensure that spelling and grammar are correct on all existing paper resources.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by encouraging tutors to undertake advanced teaching and training qualifications.
- Involve learners more in the assessment process by encouraging them to record their achievements and negotiate more specific targets with their tutors.

- Implement a company-wide strategy to support all learners for whom English is not their first language so that they receive consistent individual learning support.

Information about the inspection

32. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Director of Quality, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
33. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in the three largest subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The Skills Partnership

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	650	650
Part-time learners		
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2	
Quality of provision	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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